

Congressman

Ben Cardin

Reports From Washington

SPRING 2003

THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, MARYLAND

Dear Friends,

For many of you in the Third Congressional District, I am your new Congressman. For others, I have represented you in Washington since 1987. As your Congressman, I care deeply about representing you, keeping you informed and providing you with excellent constituent service.

Inside this newsletter is a Constituent Service Guide that will acquaint you with the many services that my congressional office can provide. From assisting you with a VA problem to getting a Social Security check reissued to helping a high school student apply to a service academy, my staff and I are ready to help.

This newsletter also outlines some of the important challenges we face. We need an economic stimulus package that will put money in the hands of consumers and create more jobs without returning us to soaring budget deficits. We face an ongoing War on Terrorism and our number one priority must be to protect our nation. At the same time, I hope we will work with the world community to change Iraq and ensure that it will no longer threaten its neighbors or the world.

On the back page, I have included a schedule of Town Hall meetings I am sponsoring. I hope to see you soon and hear your views.

Best Wishes,

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ben".



Rep. Cardin is joined by Adm. Richard Naughton, Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy, Anne Arundel Co. Executive Janet Owens, and Annapolis Alderman George Kelley and Sheila Tolliver in cutting the ribbon for his new Annapolis office.

OUR NATION'S TOP PRIORITIES

The Economy

Over the past year, unemployment has increased while consumer confidence has dropped, clear indications that our economy is in trouble. President Bush recently unveiled his economic stimulus package that calls for \$674 billion in new tax cuts - on top of the \$1.35 trillion in tax cuts enacted in 2001.

While tax cuts are always popular, the President's proposal raises questions as to whether it accomplishes its primary goal: to stimulate the economy. A minimal amount of the President's stimulus plan would impact the economy in 2003.

The other concern is that the President's tax cuts will lead to growing deficits. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan has warned lawmakers against enacting a plan that relies on deficit spending. In FY 2000 we had a budget surplus of \$236 billion. In two years, that surplus has turned into a \$159 billion deficit, and most economists now project a \$350 billion deficit by FY 2004.

This is not good news for a country in the midst of a War on Terrorism, that has new, expensive foreign obligations, and that needs greater resources so local governments can prepare for any future terrorist attacks.

Congress is interested in passing a stimulus package - one that I hope will be more fiscally responsible and that will provide an immediate stimulus to the economy. An alternative plan has been proposed that would cost 80% less than the President's and that would

provide relief for all wage earners, help fiscally-strapped local governments and provide additional benefits for those who have lost their jobs.

As a member of the Ways & Means Committee, I will be working with a bipartisan group of members who want to stimulate the economy without saddling future generations with unimaginable debt.

Homeland Security

These are frightening times. As we wage a War on Terrorism and remain involved in Afghanistan and Iraq, we face the possibility of future terrorist attacks at home. Recently, I was appointed to the newly-created Homeland Security Committee and my number one priority is to ensure that local governments have the resources they need to respond to any future terrorist threats.

Since Sept. 11, I have met with many of our local officials to discuss homeland security and a coordinated regional response to protect our communities. There is little doubt that our proximity to Washington, D.C. heightens our threat risk. It also means that our first responders - fireman and police officers, health care workers - may be called on to respond to any incident in the Washington-Baltimore-Annapolis region.

Maryland has approximately 20,000 first responders that need training and communications equipment. While we are better prepared than we were before Sept. 11, we need to do more.

I recently helped the Port of Baltimore obtain funding for a much needed mobile scanner detection system that can quickly and easily inspect the contents of trucks, containers, cargo and passenger vehicles for explosives.

Since the attacks on our nation, Baltimore City alone has spent approximately \$11 million on homeland security. It recently requested \$35 million for equipment and training to upgrade anti-terrorism plans. Every local jurisdiction in Maryland has similar needs.

Homeland security is critical to the defense of our nation. It's a responsibility that the federal government must meet. After all, we would not depend on local governments to fund our military and we should not have to depend on local governments to fund homeland security.

Iraq's Future

Whether you agree or disagree with President Bush's policies regarding the need for military action to rid Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, the long-term focus must shift to the future of Iraq and the stability of the region.

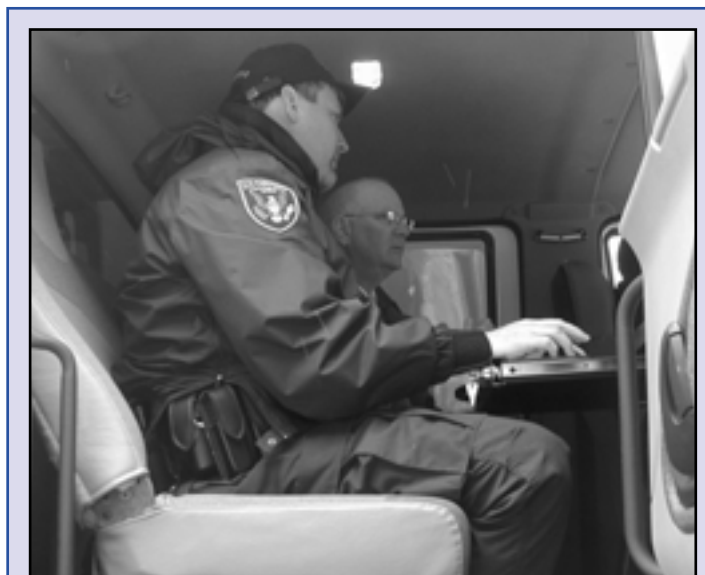
Since 1993, I have been a Commissioner on the the Helsinki Commission, working to

improve security, economic cooperation, human rights and democracy in Europe, Russia and the former Soviet republics. Recently, I was appointed the lead Democratic member of the bipartisan Commission.

I hope a prototype of the Helsinki Commission can be replicated in the Middle East to help Iraq transition to a democratic republic that respects the rule of law and human rights.

The Middle East is a tinderbox. A long-term solution must involve international organizations dedicated to solving the region's difficult problems. From educational and economic opportunities to developing democratic institutions and protecting human rights and the rule of law, we need to focus on finding long-term solutions that will bring peace.

I look forward to hearing your views as to what the U.S. role should be in Iraq at the Townhall Meeting I will holding on Monday, April 14, at Towson University.



Rep. Cardin sits at the controls of the new Port of Baltimore mobile scanner that will be used to search cargo for explosives.

Townhall Meetings

•Monday, April 14 at 10:30 a.m.
Roland Park Place
830 W. 40th St.

•Tuesday, April 15 at 10:30 a.m.
**Maryland City Senior Nutrition
& Activities Site**
8402 Brock Bridge Rd.

•Tuesday, April 15 at 3 p.m.
Park View at Columbia
7070 Cradlerock Way

•Monday, April 14 at 1:15 p.m.
Pikesville Senior Center
1301 Reisterstown Rd.

•Tuesday, April 15 at 1 p.m.
Bay Forest Apartments
940 Bay Forest Court,
Annapolis

•Wednesday, May 14 at 7:30 p.m.
**Piney Orchard Community/
Visitors Center**
2400 Stream Valley Dr.,
Odenton

•Monday, April 14 at 3 p.m.
Pickersgill Retirement Community
615 Chestnut Ave., Towson

•IRAQ: WHAT IS OUR ROLE?

•Monday, April 14 at 7 p.m.
Towson University Student Union
Osler Dr. off Towsontown Blvd.

•HOMELAND SECURITY

•Monday, April 21 at 7 p.m.
VFW Post #304
400 Chinquapin Round Rd., Annapolis

Rep. Cardin's

NEW!

E-Mail News

If you are interested in knowing more about Rep. Cardin, you can sign up for his *E-Mail News*. It will be sent out periodically and you can sign up by going to www.house.gov/cardin and clicking on *E-Mail News*.

Tax Payer's Guide For Military Personnel

The IRS has prepared the *Armed Forces Tax Guide* with information on the special tax situations of active members of the military. For a free copy, call my Baltimore District Office, 410-433-8886, or my Annapolis District Office, 410-974-9703. You can also e-mail: rep.cardin@mail.house.gov

U.S. House of Representatives
2207 Rayburn H.O.B.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Official Business

Benjamin L. Cardin

M.C.
PRSRT STD
ECRWSS

POSTAL PATRON - LOCAL
3rd Congressional District
Maryland